

# JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

Chairman

Masayuki Sawano

*Published by the Commission on Public Relations  
of the National Christian Council of Japan*

Editors:

Chuzo Yamada

Ronald G. Korver

CABLE CODE: JAPACONCIL, ADDRESS: CHRISTIAN CENTER, 2,4-CHOME GINZA, TOKYO, JAPAN

Subscription Rates: Japan ¥700, Foreign (Sea mail) \$2.00, (Air mail) \$3.50.

No. 279

October 1, 1965

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## UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST MODERATOR VISITS KOREAN CHURCH

Rev. Isamu Omura, moderator of the United Church of Christ in Japan (UCCJ), recently returned from a visit with Korean churchmen, in response to an invitation extended by the Korean Presbyterian Church.

At an interview held at the Ginza Christian Center shortly after his return, Rev. Omura noted with emphasis that there was a need for more and closer relations with the Korean Church. He was much pleased with his visit and spoke highly of a wonderful welcome. This marked the first formal visit of a top Japanese Church leader to Korea since the end of World War II.

The invitation to visit Korea was received by Mr. Omura early this year. Although the political climate between the two nations were extremely complex, the executive committee of the UCCJ decided to accept the invitation as there were no formal relations between the two churches and the wish was to develop such formal fellowship relations. There had been exchanges of visits by individual Christians and small groups but no formal relations between the two churches.

Mr. Omura's invitation was to address the Assembly of the Korean Presbyterian Church. At the Assembly he expressed regret for the bad deeds of the Japanese toward Korea in the past and stated the desire for more fellowship among the Christians of both lands.

## TRANSLATION OF ADDRESS OF DR. ISAMU OMURA AT THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE KOREAN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

It is a great pleasure to know that the Korean Presbyterian Church, under God's Mercies, is now celebrating its 50th Anniversary General Assembly. For, in this rapidly changing world, it is truly no easy task for a Christian church to survive the violent changes which have taken place throughout half a century.



It is also my greatest honor and privilege to have been given this very gracious invitation and opportunity to extend greetings to you on this momentous commemorative occasion, as a token of the fellowship between your Church and the United Church of Christ in Japan.

At this opportunity, I would like to speak first of all, in very plain words, of what has been for a long time a heavy burden on my mind. That is, I would like to apologize to you on behalf of all the Christians in Japan for the countless evildoings, which politically and in violation of basic human rights, our Government and people committed against your people, who had been for 36 years under our rule, prior to the end of World War II. I hope that you will be pleased to have this assurance of our repentance. I readily admit that we are wholly inexcusable for our having forced upon you tremendous sacrifices because of many wrong policies and administration particularly in the field of religion and education. I beg you on behalf of my people and in the name of our Lord that you will forgive us. Japan has been addicted in the past to aggressive and reckless militarism, and thus finally collapsed 30 years ago. After the war, fortunately, Japan has been enabled to accomplish a great conversion from a militaristic country to a peace-loving country. The beloved sister countries have always been an encouragement to us throughout this period, not to mention the name of the United States. Now our country is striving very hard to open up a new way of a reborn life for ourselves. We are determined to contribute to the cause of peace, welfare and prosperity of Asia -- hand in hand with you, and with other Asian Countries, which at one time were caused to endure great trouble because of our chauvinism and aggressive policy.

We are pleased to learn of the recent favorable growth of your church. In the past the relations between your church and ours have not necessarily been as close as we would like. We are very regretful over this fact, but now sincerely hope, availing ourselves of this opportunity, that we will deepen our inter-communication and fellowship and understanding by keeping in close touch with each other, and strive together to carry out our common task which is committed to us by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Finally, I would like to express my heart-felt appreciation to you for your having invited me and given me the wonderful opportunity to fellowship with you on this memorable occasion. I am indeed grateful to you for the very warm hospitality shown to me everywhere by the brethren in your country. May God grant that you will be increasingly of service to your nation, and be a fruitful witness of the great work of our Lord.

This much I will say by way of greetings.

The United Church of Christ in Japan

September 25, 1965

Isamu Omura, Moderator

#### JAPANESE-KOREAN CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP SOCIETY

Preparations are underway for the formation of a Japanese-Korean Christian Fellowship Society which will be not just a temporary "get-together-to-talk" type, but a permanent organization.

A preparation committee composed of leading Japanese Christians and Korean Christians living in Japan met at the Tokyo Church of the Korean Church in Japan on Sept. 9, to deliberate articles of the proposed association. At this meeting the participants pledged to pray for better relations between the two nations no matter what the political or international relations of the two nations might be now or in the future.

The stated purpose of the society is to "deepen the fellowship between Christians of the two nations and to work towards improving relations between all citizens of the two nations.

Members of the preparations committee are now seeking additional members from among interested Japanese and Korean Christians in Japan



DR. HEPBURN

Dr. James C. Hepburn, former Presbyterian missionary to Japan, is still well-known today for his method of romanization of Japanese words. Although there are still attempts to replace his system by one produced by the Japanese government during extreme nationalistic days, Dr. Hepburn's superior approach remains preeminent.

In a recent issue of the Japan Times, Lewis Bush, an "old Japan Hand," recalls for readers the contributions of Dr. Hepburn.

Dr. Hepburn, "missionary, author, medical doctor and translator" is praised for having "sorted out a tower of Babel brought about through various approaches to romanizing Japanese."

Mr. Bush also notes that the respect shown for Dr. Hepburn's service can be measured by the unusual honor bestowed upon him by Emperor Meiji who conferred upon Dr. Hepburn the Order of the Rising Sun on his 90th birthday in 1905, at a time when Japan was at war with Russia.

Also noted by Mr. Bush was an editorial which appeared in the "Japan Mail" at the time Dr. Hepburn died in 1911 at the age of 96. The editorial stated that "the learned American 'was a man whose name will be remembered with respect and affection as long as Yokohama has annals--a man of beauty of character, untiring charity, absolute self-rejection, steady zeal in the cause of everything good, constituting a picture which could not fail to appeal to the Japanese people."

NEW U.S. IMMIGRATION LAW HAILED BY ALL JAPANESE

The new U.S. immigration law which does away with the offensive 41-year-old policy of limiting immigration on the basis of nationality is being hailed by both Japanese government and citizens. Christian leaders see the legislation as the inevitable, but long awaited, result of the working of Christ's spirit among American Christians and the harbinger of an era of liberalization of the movement of peoples.

The Japanese Foreign Office is urging those Japanese who wish to migrate to the States to take necessary measures soon, as immigration will be approved by the U.S. on a "first come, first served" basis.

The quota for Japan has been 185 a year, and against this quota, more than 5,000 applicants have registered, waiting their turn to migrate. Under the new immigration law, which comes completely into effect in three years, up to 120,000 people a year will be permitted to enter from the Western Hemisphere and up to 170,000 from the Eastern Hemisphere including Japan.

Freer international movement of skilled labor, liberalization of world trade and exchange dealings are gradually working to bring our world closer together. Our concern is that spiritually we may be prepared for these encounters.

EAST ASIAN MISSION GIRLS STUDENT DORMITORY

Following the visit of Rev. Erich Kuehn, President of the German East Asia Mission in May of last year, plans have been underway for the erection of a student dormitory for girls, to be erected on Mission property.

This project is being undertaken with the needs of women students of East Asia especially in mind. The intention is also "to create a place where the encounter with the Christian faith will help non-Christians to a better understanding of Christianity."

A Zaidan Hojin (foundation) will be established to include pastors of the Church, Christian professors of the universities, representatives of the Student YM and YWCAs, and representatives of Japan NCC and EAM. This Foundation will be an associate member of the Japan NCC.



TOKYO'S SHOEMAKER POET

This December the friends of Tokyo's shoemaker-poet, Kazumugi Kudo, will celebrate the 100th issue of Cloud and Barley, the Poetry magazine Kudo founded eight years ago.

Clouds and Barley (Kumo to Mugi) is the organ of a group of 165 minor Japanese poets, who regard Kudo as their teacher.

Mr. Kudo, 34, has taught a Sunday school class in Edogawa Church since he was fifteen.

1965 JAPAN CHRISTIAN YEARBOOK

A limited printing of the 1965 Japan Christian Yearbook, minus the advertisements, was made available for circulation at the annual meeting of the Fellowship of Christian missionaries in July. It was the understanding at the time that the Yearbook, inclusive of advertisements, would be on sale to the general public early in August. However, due to the inability of the publisher to get the advertisements ready on time, the binding of the complete book was postponed until late in October. The Yearbook Editorial Committee deeply regrets the delay and has already taken steps to facilitate the prompt publication of the 1966 volume.

According to the Japan Times review, "the 1965 volume is a superior one and all who try to keep abreast of the Protestant movement, or more particularly the Protestant missionary movement in this country, cannot afford to be without it. It is much more comprehensive than any previous postwar volume, and many of the prewar volumes as well."

The 636 pages which make up the volume are approximately evenly divided between a 334 page narrative section and 302 pages devoted to directories, missionary obituaries and statistics. Part I contains five articles on the Japanese political scene, the economy, society, culture and the non-Christian religious world, by noted Japanese Christian scholars. Part II is devoted to articles on the churches, inter-church and inter-missionary groups. Part III is the unique feature of this volume and contains the first postwar survey of the Christian movement by districts. Part IV on Christian education includes valuable appraisals of Sunday and church schools, Christian kindergartens, Christian schools, theological education and Christianity in non-Christian universities. Part V, on the mission of the Church includes a large number of articles on the various types of evangelism, Christian publications, social welfare work, laymen's activities, youth work, and the role of the missionary. Part VI includes directories of Japanese Church headquarters, other Christian agencies, mission boards and societies, missionaries by prefectures and societies, the alphabetical list of missionaries, missionary obituaries, with statistical charts inserted at the end of the volume.

Priced at only ¥800 (\$4.50 abroad), it is bound in sturdy cloth board for permanent reference use. The 1965 Yearbook is now on sale at the Kyo Bun Kwan and other Christian book stores in Japan. Overseas order may be placed with the Friendship Press, New York.